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SMALL-TALK.

SMALL-TALK, as a peculiarity of Great Britain, is ridiculed not only by foreigners, but by natives. Yet I humbly think that it is worthy of adoption by the former, and ought never to be disparaged by the latter. We are said to be a taciturn people. Granted: we do not deny it. We are not fond, on being thrown into strangers' society, of freely dispensing, without preface or premeditation, our ideas on things in general. Our characteristic caution forbids us to run risks; hence we deem it necessary to throw out, before every discussion, certain feelers to ascertain the general current of opinion which runs in the stranger's mind—an excellent expedient for preventing disagreement. Let us suppose two Englishmen seated in a public vehicle. At the end of the first half hour of the journey, it strikes Mr A. that a little conversation would not be disagreeable. He glances towards his fellow-passenger to observe what sort of a man he seems. Mr B., having been thinking exactly the same thing, has made up his mind to perform a similar survey; their eyes consequently meet, and suddenly drop, as if each had been detected in doing something by stealth. This embarrassing circumstance postpones the conversation for a second half hour, and would, in all probability, effectually prevent it, but for the never-failing resource of small-talk. Mr A., now out of all patience with silence, puts his head out of the window, and, taking a survey of the country around, and of the firmament above, declares—as if he were addressing the turnpike man of the gate they are just passing through—that "It is a fine day!" Mr B., unwilling to take the speaker's word for the assertion, looks out of the window at his side, and then exclaims, "Very;" whereupon he resumes his lounge in the corner of the coach, but presently adds, that he should not be at all surprised if it were to rain before long. To this Mr A. modestly dissent, but he is clearly of opinion that the thunder shower of last Tuesday was a very heavy one. A cordial agreement is now come to on the subject of our very variable climate, a point on which we do not remember, indeed, ever to have heard but one opinion in the course of life. Hitherto, all has been small-talk; but now a higher atmosphere is reached. One of the men has studied the recent writers on meteorology, and can talk learnedly on the law of storms, the dew-point, and the theory of Mr Howard as to the declination of the moon—all of which is particularly instructive to the other, who happens to be sufficiently a man of science both to understand and to profit by it. Now, be it remembered, the solid and useful part of this conversation had its birth in small-talk, and, without small-talk, in all probability, it never would have had any existence at all. Perhaps, however, Mr A. is a politician, while Mr B., though not exactly so, is both able and willing to exercise the glorious privilege of a Briton to be as discontented as he pleases. In this case, the remark of Mr B., that it will probably rain ere long, leads off in a totally different direction. Mr A., instead of dissenting, agrees with Mr B. in the opinion that it will rain, and dreads injury to the crops; then, putting on a grave expression of countenance, he looks straight into his companion's face, and begs humbly to inquire, what is to become of the country if bread rises in price! Mr B., hereupon, shakes his head very emphatically, and looks all willingness to be assured of the extreme danger in which the commonwealth is at present placed. They go on to discuss the corn and new poor-laws, national distress, free-trade, and bribery at elections; all which subjects are so fully commented upon, that

one cannot help regretting that the prime minister or some other member of the administration is not present to profit by the discussion. Now all this, again, owes its origin solely to small-talk.

Hundreds of instances are on record of the inconvenience and danger resulting, in promiscuous companies, from an omission of the ordinary prefaces about the weather, the crops, &c. Bold innovators, regardless of established custom, have been known to get into serious scrapes from a contempt of small-talk, and a too sudden invasion of larger topics. These kind of people pride themselves upon despising the petty fripperies (as they are pleased to call them) of conversation, and boast of a plain-spoken, downright style of address, to which it is their pleasure to apply the adjective "honest." Such men—scorning to provide themselves with necessary information regarding the prejudices of their temporary companions by means of the aforesaid preliminary prattle—often unwittingly offend the ears and hurt the feelings of strangers by the most awkward allusions. It is recorded of one of these persons, that, travelling in the inside of a stage-coach, he fell to, without preface or apology, uttering the most uncomplimentary things of Sheridan, then a candidate for the city of Westminster. The subject of the tirade happened to be his fellow-passenger, and for a time held his peace. On alighting at Salisbury to sup, however, Sheridan by some means ascertained his detractor's name and calling, and on resuming the journey, entered into conversation with him. The subject was electioneering, and Sheridan remarked, that the most venal and corrupt voter he knew was one Thomas Brown, a hosier in the Strand. "Why, my name is Thomas Brown!" exclaimed the indignant hosier; "and mine," rejoined the wit, "is Sheridan!" Thomas saw that the retaliation was just, and mutual forgiveness followed. Sheridan was a perfect master of talk in all its varieties, but in the use of the small species, he had no equal; and this facility he used so effectually, that the voter changed his opinion of the candidate, and on returning to town, actually voted for him. It is not always, however, that mistakes arising from a contempt of small-talk end so happily. I have known disastrous consequences result from the similar conduct of several of these John Blunts; such as discussing the merits of the opera before quakers, talking of temperance to a tavern keeper, condemning the last new novel within earshot of its author, and abusing the county member to his face. But enough of these misadventures; let us now address ourselves to the advantages of small-talk.

To small-talk many a man owes the great blessing of his existence—of course I mean his wife. His first meeting with her was no doubt at some friendly assembly; for, contrary to the prevalent opinion relative to the place where matches are made, I maintain that, from the middle ranks upward, nine out of ten marriages originate in the ball and drawing-room. At the first meeting a formulary of small-talk is invariably gone through, which in due time leads to more confidential converse. During the pauses of a dance, for example, the young gentleman, after some hesitation, and a few preliminary efforts to strengthen his courage for the undertaking, commences the conversation by inquiring whether the damsel be fond of dancing. The affirmative which he naturally receives closes the charming interchange of words for the present, and he is obliged to break out into another branch of inquiry, by asking how the young lady stands affected towards music—and whether she practises that science? A conversation is at length launched by this successful query, for the lady, after repeating the

invariable "yes," is drawn into a discussion concerning the various composers who are most popular at the time. These are the leading varieties of topics for the ball-room; but an exhibition of pictures also serves very well, when any such thing happens to exist at the time and place. It is most inexpedient to start with anything of a less simple and familiar kind. It startles the young lady, and adds to the natural embarrassment of the crisis. I was once a witness to the dire effects of an attempt of this kind. It was at an English watering-place: a friend was extremely anxious to be introduced to a certain young lady at an approaching dance, and I managed to fulfil his wishes so well, that he had the happiness of being her partner in a quadrille. Being far too original a genius to avail himself of the old-fashioned queries about music and dancing, he determined to strike out into a new path. The purpose for which he was present in the town being uppermost in his mind, he smiled his best, and tenderly inquired of the lady "if she were fond of swimming?" As might be expected, this question blighted all his hopes: the damsel was dumb to him for ever after.

What, again, would the dinner-table be without small-talk? Medical men assert that a strong exercise of the intellectual faculties is positively injurious to digestion; whilst the cheerful flow of easy insignificant conversation assists it. Luckily, prolonged discussions are impracticable; the different courses interrupt them; and the pleasures of eating and talking cannot be conveniently enjoyed at the same moment. The most that can be ventured is a bare allusion to some public event or private misfortune, a short discussion on a new literary work, or a few surmises as to the good or bad fortune of some recent marriage. When the ladies retire, the range of subjects enlarges, though small-talk ought most undoubtedly to predominate. Men do not meet socially to hear scientific lectures; and all those who would endeavour to introduce them, ought to be handed over to the tender mercies of a punster. The great object is interchange, not monopoly of ideas, and no one is thanked who, eminent in one particular branch of knowledge, takes advantage of that superior attainment to discourse upon it, to the exclusion of topics which would be more interesting to, because better understood by, the rest of the guests. The progress from small-talk (in which every one can share) to subjects of a higher kind should be gradual, and when the interest is manifestly flagging, the small-talk should be resumed, so as to lead up to something more entertaining to the majority. In short, I find the most agreeable after-dinner conversation to be that which is neither too frivolous nor too grave, and which, while it allows of occasional jocularity, admits of remarks both solid and informing.

Meantime, the ladies in the drawing-room are absorbed in small-talk. They know its value too well to allow of any other description of conversation. It is natural, that, as it is their lot to grace and adorn the home and the hearth, the subject of their discussion should be domestic calamities and domestic joys. I have heard that the excellencies and faults of their servants—the taste, expensiveness, and fashions of female attire; good-natured criticism on the family arrangements of those friends who happen not to be present; the eligibility or imprudence of certain matrimonial unions, which are within their especial ken as likely to be commented; the delights of shopping, and the proficiency of their children in the various branches of knowledge they are studying at school—form the staple of pleasing gossip of ladies of my own rank in life. But when the gentlemen join, the small-talk takes another direction; the young ladies are ad-

dressed on the subject of the various public shows, which they are always assumed to have seen ; the Royal Academy exhibition undergoes a severe scrutiny ; the last new opera is praised along with the last new novel, and the wonderful fidelity of Daguerreotype miniatures is admitted. To such delightful interchanges of small-talk, then, does many a happy husband love to look back and trace the origin of his bliss.

Besides the pleasures and convenience of small-talk amongst equals, it is an admirable medium of intercourse between the humble and the great ; and if no other argument could be adduced in its favour, one fact would alone be enough to answer those supercilious folks who condemn it. It is this : the higher you go in rank and education, the more assiduously will you find the art of small-talking cultivated. A late monarch, whose external polish procured for him the name of the "finest gentleman in Europe," was celebrated for the grace and aptness of his small-talk. This gave him the knack of speaking to all persons in their own language, and appearing to sympathise with their ideas—that kind of condescension which places the parties on a level, and sets the inferior at his ease. Suppose yourself, for instance, having occasion to call upon a duke on some matter of business. You have magnificent notions of his state, and the value of his time, and fancy that he will afford you exactly enough of his valuable leisure to transact the affair you are engaged in, and not a minute more. You arrive with punctuality, and are ushered into the library. Presently his grace comes in from a side door, and says, as if he had known you perfectly well, "Good morning, Mr Hopton;" and you wonder how the duke manages to recollect your name so pat. If you be a merchant, your noble friend will instantly commence advertising to some topic which is, as the newspapers say, creating a sensation in the city, because he supposes you will be most at home upon that matter. Perhaps there has been a sudden rise in hops, and you are astonished to find that a duke should be so very conversant with the vicissitudes of the hop market. Presently he pays you the compliment of making you his instructor upon some point connected with your calling, and politely thanks you for the information you afford him. He now knows that you are quite at your ease—that he has dispelled all that awkward feeling which arose from the great disparity of rank ; and, as if by accident, he introduces the subject of your visit with, perhaps, "Apropos of high prices, regarding the matter to which I am indebted for this call"—and the duke finishes the sentence with a concise statement of his own views on the subject. There is no more small-talk now. The whole business is concentrated, with official precision, into a few words as possible. The discussion ended, the duke rises, wishes you a kind good morning, waits till you have disappeared, and vanishes into his study. "What a pleasing manner!" you exclaim ; "what affability!" but if you trace all the duke's gentle considerateness of your feelings, all his politeness to its source, you will see it all took the external form of small-talk. Nor must you suppose it was a matter of chance that his grace knew so much about hops ; whatever your profession, he would have appeared equally *en fuit*. To let you into a secret, his grace most likely studied his part before you came. In the course of arranging the interview beforehand, he took pains to learn not only your name correctly to a letter, but also your line of life ; and "got up" his knowledge of hops for the occasion, that the small-talk might be that which you know most about. This may be acting ; but it is no small trouble to study the parts ; and who has the benefit of the study? You ; for its sole object is to relieve you from embarrassment, and to give you the full use of your faculties for the actual subject of the interview.

Let me not, however, be thought a one-sided advocate of small-talk. I only wish to stem the torrent of disparagement which has set in against it, and to show how useful it is in our passage through life. As a preface to more important chapters of conversation, its utility is, I think, decided : when, on the other hand, it forms the chapters themselves, it is utterly insipid and intolerable. Every man should know how to talk small-talk in its proper place ; but no one should habituate his tongue to small-talk continually, though, after all, even that is an amiable weakness. Look around the circle of your acquaintance, and, picking out its small-talkers (for there is at least one in every coterie), see if he be not a kind, good-natured, obliging sort of person ; take him all in all, a useful member of society. Having nothing weighty to occupy his mind, he is always ready to take any burden off yours ; a little gossiping persuasion, and he will run from Dan to Beersheba to do you a favour. All he requires in return is perhaps a cup of tea, and an invitation to your next party. Mix him, in a large soirée, with a host of your friends, and he will turn out a most useful person. His remarks, frivolous as they are, serve to take up the links of conversation which are occasionally dropped ; and he not unfrequently heals little dissonances of opinion by the simple plaster of harmless tattle. Then what an untiring auditor he is! It is curious to see the patience with which the small-talkers will listen to a philosopher who is anxious to propound some new theory, not so much perhaps for the edification of his hearers, as to show his own erudition. The small-talkers stand in an attitude of

deep attention. Though it is quite evident he understands but very imperfectly what the speaker is saying, yet at each sentence he interjects some small expression of assent. Shut your ears to the philosopher, keeping them open merely to the sounds uttered by his companion, and you will hear at regular intervals, "O yes"—"Decidedly"—"Just so"—"Indeed"—"Oh, clearly"—"Very"—"Most undoubtedly"—"No doubt"—"Singular"—"Extraordinary"—"You don't say so"—"I am entirely of your opinion." These are trifling complaisances, but they spring from benevolence, and serve an indispensable purpose. Nor is the small-talker useless in other respects : there is a certain kind of information which you will scarcely get from anybody else. He will tell you who Lord so and so married, and when ; the age of the heir, and the number of brothers and sisters. He knows all the best schools at which to put your boys, and can inform you correctly of the terms and extras. To the female heads of families, the small-talker is invaluable ; he is, in fact, a real blessing to mothers ; he can give the addresses of the most fashionable dancing-masters, and recommend the best specifics for the hooping-cough. He furnishes accounts of the most amusing and instructive exhibitions, with the prices of admission, and is ever ready to take the young folks to them. Is there a fine picture brought before the public ? the small-talker, instead of descanting on its merits, gives you the private history of the artist. Does a striking article appear in a leading review ? Mr Small-Talk will tell you the name of the author, and how much per sheet he got for writing it. He knows the town address of almost every public character, and of very great men, at what hour they dine. In short, the professed small-talker is a perfect hand-book of diminutive information of every kind.

Never, then, let us hear anything further to the disadvantage of small-talk. Amidst the solids of the social table, it may appear as something which would never be missed, were it absent. Neither, perhaps, would the salt-cellars and casters be missed at first from an actual dining table ; but, after the dinner had commenced, how soon would the presence of these articles be found indispensable ! So, we verily believe, would it be with small-talk, if by any chance it were to be blotted from the system of things.

DISCOVERIES ON THE NORTH COAST OF AMERICA.

SECOND ARTICLE.

In a former article we detailed the origin and objects of the late expedition to the Arctic Ocean, fitted out by the Hudson's Bay Company, and intrusted to the direction of Messrs. Desse and Simpson. We also traced its progress, from the time the party left Red River Settlement, in the winter of 1836, throughout their descent of the Mackenzie, and their successful exploration of the Arctic coast from the mouth of the Mackenzie to Cape North, during the following summer, up to their return to winter quarters, on Great Bear Lake, towards the end of September, 1837. We shall now follow the expedition in its further progress during the summers of 1838 and 1839.

Having reached winter quarters on the 23d of September, they found that their foraging party had secured a position on the eastern extremity of the lake, which not only commanded an extensive prospect of the water, but was well sheltered, and had a natural landing place of rocks for the boats at the very door. A log-house having been constructed, which was dignified with the name of "Fort Confidence," and the boats and other apparatus being secured, the men were dispersed in detachments, some to fish, others to hunt, and others to procure wood for fuel. By the 5th of October the lake was frozen in, snow had fallen to the depth of several feet, and winter had commenced his long and dreary reign. "I spent" says Mr. Simpson, "a great part of the months of October and November in hunting excursions with the Indians. The deer fortunately began to draw in from the north-east to the country between Great Bear Lake and the Coppermine ; and as soon as any animals were shot, I despatched a share of the prey by our people and dogs to the establishment ; at the same time I highly relished the animation of the chase, and the absolute independence of an Indian life. Our tents were usually pitched in the last of the stunted straggling woods ; whence we issued out at daybreak among the bare snowy hills of the 'barren lands,' where the deer could be distinguished a great way off, by the contrast of their dun colour with the pure white of the boundless waste. The hunters then disperse, and advance in such a manner, as to intercept the deer in their confused retreat to windward—the direction they almost invariably follow. On one occasion, I witnessed an extraordinary instance of affection in these timid creatures. Having brought down a fine doe at some distance, I was running forward to despatch her with my knife, when a handsome young buck bounded up, and raised his fallen favourite with his antlers. She went a few paces, and fell ; again he raised her, and continued wheeling

around her, till a second ball—for hunger is ruthless—laid him dead at her side."

The country in the neighbourhood of Bear Lake is described as undulating and tolerably wooded, and Mr. Simpson noticed several trees that had attained a diameter of eighteen inches, which is large timber for such a barren and rocky country. To the east and north the wood entirely disappeared, the surface presented a continuous series of plains and swamps, and was altogether so waste and dreary, that it receives the appellation of the "Barrens"—a designation given to the whole north-east angle of the continent, from the 60th parallel of latitude. The entire region is apparently of primitive formation ; the few rocks left exposed by the snow being of red and gray granite. This district was surveyed, during winter, by Mr. Simpson, and presented the same inhospitable features throughout. By the depth of winter, few of the animal creation remained in the neighbourhood of Fort Confidence ; and the party of course fared chiefly on preserved provisions, fish, of which the lake yielded an inexhaustible supply even under seven feet ice, and on fresh reindeer and musk-ox flesh, which was provided by relays of native hunters, from more sheltered regions. There was no lack of good fare. "By this time," says Mr. Simpson, "we had, through our indefatigable exertions, accumulated two or three weeks' provision in advance, and no scarcity was experienced during the remainder of the season. The daily ration served out to each man was increased from eight to ten, and to some individuals twelve pounds of venison ; or, when they could be got, four or five white fish, weighing from fifteen to twenty pounds ! This quantity of solid food, immoderate as it may appear, does not exceed the average standard of the country ; and ought certainly to appease even the inordinate appetite of a French Canadian."

The winter, on the whole, presented nothing uncommon for an Arctic winter ; though the cold was sometimes so intense, as to reduce the thermometer to 40, 56, and even 60 degrees below zero ! From the 30th of November to the 12th of January, the inhabitants of Fort Confidence had not seen the sun ; on the 12th, "the very children clapped their hands for joy when the bright orb first flashed above the trees ; and though we did not, like the ancient Scandinavians of the Polar Circle, hold a festival for his resurrection, our feelings were perhaps no less joyful. To cheer us during this long dark interval, the loveliest of planets, Venus, appeared above our horizon in December, and continued to shine upon our solitary dwelling with daily-increasing altitude and lustre." The aurora borealis was of course, during this period, an almost constant phenomenon, though "its displays were seldom very brilliant, and it hardly ever exhibited those vivid prismatic tints which are admired in lower latitudes." February was the severest month. March was also cold and dreary, and it was not till the 24th of April that "the thermometer rose at noon to the freezing point, for the first time since the 17th of October, a period of six months and a week !" On the 15th of May, a solitary goose, the first harbinger of spring, flew over Fort Confidence ; followed, a few days after, by some swans, divers, and other aquatic birds. This was the signal that the winter had passed ; the Indians who had congregated about the fort began to disperse to the hunting grounds, and the expedition to prepare for further exploration.

By the 6th of June (1838), the ice had so much broken up, that the expedition commenced operations. Their first duty was to cross from Great Bear Lake to Coppermine River, a tract of country occupied by rivers, lakes, and swamps. This difficult part of the journey was performed sometimes by dropping down the rivers, sometimes by travelling on foot and towing the boats, and at other times by actually dragging the boats in sledge-fashion over the melting ice and snow. However, they had sport and feasting in abundance, as herds of deer and musk-cattle were continually passing them on their way to the pasture plains ; while the white wolf and northern bear afforded the higher excitement and perils of the chase. On the 20th they arrived at Coppermine River, which, after some days' delay, was descended with extreme danger :—"From Sir John Franklin's description of the lower part of the Coppermine, we anticipated a day of dangers and excitement ; nor were we disappointed. Franklin made his descent on the 15th of July, when the river had fallen to its summer level ; but we were swept down by the spring flood, now at its very height. The swollen and tumultuous stream was still strewed with loose ice, while the inaccessible banks were piled up with ponderous fragments. The day was bright and lovely as we shot down rapid after rapid ; in many of which we had to pull for our lives, to keep out of the suction of the precipices, along whose base the breakers raged and foamed with overwhelming fury. Shortly before noon, we came in sight of Escape Rapid of Franklin ; and a glance at the overhanging cliffs told us that there was no alternative but to run down with full cargo. In an instant we were in the vortex, and, before we were aware, my boat was borne towards an isolated rock, which the boiling surge almost concealed. To clear it on the outside was no longer possible ; our only

* "I had the curiosity," says Mr. Simpson, "when the thermometer stood at 40 degrees below zero, to cast a pistol bullet of quicksilver, which, at ten paces, passed through an inch plank, but flattened and broke against the wall three or four paces beyond it."

chance of safety was to run between it and the lofty eastern cliff. The word was passed, and every breath was hushed. A stream, which dashed down upon us over the brow of the precipice more than a hundred feet in height, mingled with the spray that whirled upwards from the rapid, forming a terrific shower-bath. The pass was about eight feet wide, and the error of a single foot on either side would have been instant destruction. As, guided by Sinclair's consummate skill, the boat shot safely through those jaws of death, an involuntary cheer arose. Our next impulse was to turn round to view the fate of our comrades behind. They had profited by the peril we incurred, and kept without the treacherous rock in time. The waves there were still higher, and for a while we lost sight of our friends. When they emerged, the first object visible was the Bowman disgorging part of an intrusive wave which he had swallowed, and looking half-drowned. Mr Dease afterwards told me that the spray, which completely enveloped them, formed a gorgeous rainbow around the boat."

On the 6th of July, the party were once more on the shores of the Arctic Ocean, pushing their way eastward through the ice, after the same laborious fashion which characterised the westward progress of the previous summer. The season of 1838, however, was not so favourable; ice-winds, fogs, snows, and deluges of rain were extremely prevalent, and these, in conjunction with the excessive irregularity of the coast-line, much retarded their progress. By the 20th of August, they had only reached the farthest point gained by Franklin in 1821, and the appearance of the ice seemed to forbid any farther advance with the boats. Accordingly, Mr Simpson, as on the former season, mustered a little foot-party of seven, and in Esquimaux fashion set out a ten days' journey to the eastward, leaving Mr Dease with the boats to await his return. This hazardous undertaking was crowned with signal success, and the discovery of Victoria Land, separated from the main continent by a narrow strait, was the triumph of his enterprise. Having ascertained the existence of this new land, and having reached the 106th degree of west longitude, Mr Simpson retraced his steps, and rejoined the main body of the expedition on the 29th of August. The bad weather and advanced season now rendered every one anxious to return to winter quarters, and accordingly their course was reversed, and Coppermine River safely re-entered on the 3d of September. The ascent was chiefly accomplished by towing, the current of the rapids being greatly lessened by the subsiding of the waters, which had taken place to the extent of thirty feet since the expedition descended; and on the 14th, our travellers were regaling themselves under the shelter of Fort Confidence.

With the exception of the discovery of Victoria Land, the campaign of 1838 was of itself little satisfactory; but taken in connexion with a knowledge of the route, and the deposits of provisions and ammunition, it became of essential service to future proceedings. During the laborious exertions necessary to the progress of the expedition, there was little opportunity for observations on the natural history and features of the country; but we glean from Mr Simpson's narrative several facts which seem worthy of notice. It has been stated that the district around Fort Confidence was granitic; as they advanced eastward, gneiss, slate-rock, red sandstone, and conglomerate, were successively met with, the latter being sometimes broken up by effusions of trap. In this primary district many metalliferous stones were observed; and the name, Coppermine River, is sufficiently indicative of the fact, which had been observed by former travellers. Specimens of copper ore, native copper, and lead ore, were frequently picked up, and "the cliffs were everywhere stained with verdigris, indicating the presence of the metal, which undoubtedly abounds in these regions." Unlike the coast of the western Arctic, which chiefly consisted of low mud-banks resting on a substratum of yellow clay, the eastern coast was bold and precipitous, Cape Alexander rising from the ocean to the height of several hundred feet. The tide also flowed more freely and regularly, rising to the height of three feet, occasionally fringing the beach with shells and sea-weed, thus indicating its connexion with a more open and genial ocean. Generally speaking, the same land and aquatic animals were met with, the insect tribes (mosquitoes, &c.) being more numerous; and the same sort of vegetation was observed, even "flowers of various hues" adorning the scanty sward of these Hyperborean regions.

The winter transactions at Fort Confidence in 1838-39 were little diversified from those of the previous season, unless that the natives squatted in greater numbers around the establishment. We shall therefore dismiss this portion of the narrative, merely extracting the following graphic sketch of Indian gastronomy:—"No people so soon get tired of any particular diet as Indians; and their longings for change, even amidst the best cheer, are often truly ridiculous. The flexibility of their stomachs is no less surprising. At one time they will gorge themselves with food, and are then prepared to go without any for several days, if necessary. Enter their tents; sit there if you can for a whole day, and not for an instant will you find the fire unoccupied by persons of all ages cooking. When not hunting or travelling, they are, in fact, always eating. Now, it is a little roast, a partridge, or

rabbit perhaps; now, a tid-bit broiled under the ashes; anon, a portly kettle, well filled with venison, swings over the fire; then comes a choice dish of curdled blood, followed by the sinews and marrow-bones of deer's legs singed on the embers; and so the grand business of life goes unceasingly round, interrupted only by sleep!" Another physical singularity of the northern Indian which Mr Simpson notices is, that, though capable of resisting the most intense cold, they are so fond of fire, that they will be found squatting on the hearth, where a white man would speedily be roasted. This, however, is not the case with the Esquimaux, who seem to have no idea of fire as a means of imparting warmth, and never approach it unless for the purposes of cooking their rude meals.

The summer of 1839 opened with unusually bright prospects; the Coppermine River was clear of ice sixteen days earlier than in 1838; and by the 1st of July, our adventurers were for the third time coasting along the shores of the Polar Ocean; vegetation had also made greater progress; the ground was comparatively dry; the chase yielded more abundant provision; while the mouths of the rivers teemed with salmon "not at all inferior to those of Scottish waters." By the end of July, Melville Island and Elllice River (much larger than the Coppermine) had been discovered and passed; and by the 13th of August, Back's Point, in the estuary of Great Fish River, was safely arrived at. "All the objects for which the expedition was so generously instituted were now accomplished; but Mr Dease and myself were not quite satisfied. We had determined the northern limits of America to the eastward of the Great Fish River; it still remained a question whether Boothia Felix might not be united to the continent on the other side of the estuary. The men, who had never dreamed of going farther, were therefore summoned, and the importance of proceeding some distance to the eastward explained to them; when, to their honour, all assented without a murmur." Accordingly the sails were again bent, and the east headland of the Great Fish River estuary doubled on the 18th. This they designated "Cape Britannia," raised a pile of ponderous stones, deposited a sealed bottle containing an outline of their proceedings, and again held on to the eastward. By the 20th, they had reached the 94th degree of west longitude; but the wind now shifted into the east, and "in the night-time some flocks of Canada geese flew southwards, a sure sign of an approaching change in the season." To have proceeded further would have been fool-hardiness, and the more, that the object of their mission had been attained, and the formerly delineated Gulf of Boothia on the eastward in full view before them. A monument was therefore reared on the headland they had reached, fronting the opposite coast of Boothia Felix, and preparations made for returning. On the 21st of August, the wind, which forbade their advance, gave wings to their retreat, and bore them back the same night to Cape Britannia. They then crossed the strait (ten miles in width), and coasted along Boothia Felix for sixty or seventy miles; re-crossed to the mainland of America till in 105 degrees west longitude, when opposite Victoria Land. Here they again left the American side, and coasted along the newly discovered land for nearly 200 miles. Mr Simpson considers Victoria Land as likely to be a large island, separated on the east from Boothia Felix, and on the west from Wollaston Land by narrow straits or channels. Boothia Felix they found to be "a limestone country, low and uninteresting, but abounding in reindeer, musk-cattle, and old native encampments;" the cliffs of Victoria Land presented a bold beetling front of red sandstone, "faced with everlasting ice," yet around its shores were the traces of Esquimaux encampments.

It was now the middle of September, and winter had set in with severity. The party pursued their homeward track unremittingly, night and day; and on the 16th, made their entrance into the Coppermine, after by far the longest voyage ever performed in boats on the Polar Sea, the distance being not less than 1631 statute miles! At the rapids, they lightened themselves by leaving "one of their sweet little craft, the sails, masts, iron-works, some dressed leather, skins, old nets, oil-cloths, and surplus pemican," which would no doubt prove a valuable acquisition to the poor Esquimaux who frequent that station. And well did these poor fellows deserve it; for, unlike their pilfering and treacherous brethren of the far west, they had been uniformly quiet, shy, and inoffensive; while one family exhibited an extraordinary trait of good faith, which puts even civilised communities to the blush. On descending the rapids in June, Mr Dease, anxious to obtain a pair of Esquimaux boots for his own use, gave his measure to the head of this family, and paid him, stating that he would return to the river by September. When the expedition returned, the Esquimaux family had gone to their hunting-grounds, but the boots were left attached to a long pole planted on the bank of the river! The ascent of the river was soon accomplished. On the 24th, the friendly shelter of Fort Confidence was reached; on the 26th, it was abandoned, and the goods and chattels distributed among the Indians; and on the following day, the gallant adventurers were on their homeward journey to Red River Settlement. Here Mr Simpson arrived after a journey of most extraordinary celerity, having traversed 1910 miles on foot in sixty-one days, including all stoppages!

So far all had terminated well, and our traveller had gained for himself immortal honours. He had established the existence of the long-sought-for "north-west passage;" he had completed the survey of the Arctic coast of America, between the point reached by Beechey from the Pacific, and that to which Ross had penetrated from the Atlantic. The civilised world resounded with the triumph of his indomitable perseverance; but the spirit of his enterprise was not quenched. He longed to unriddle the intricate complication of straits, gulfs, inlets, and islands, which lie in and around the Gulf of Boothia, and for that purpose had memorialised the Hudson's Bay Company. At Red River he remained, anxiously waiting for letters from England, which would authorise his proceeding on his new expedition. With the wonted spirit and liberality, the Company immediately acceded to the proposal; but some delay occurred in the transmission of the letters. Grievously disappointed and impatient, Simpson started for Canada, with the view of proceeding in person to England. On the 6th of June 1840, he left Red River Settlement, accompanied by a party of settlers and half-breeds. Eager to advance, he soon got tired of their slow movements, and went ahead in company with four of the latter; on the 14th, he was a murdered corpse! The fact is clear enough, though the circumstances are involved in mystery. "All that can be ascertained (we quote the memoir prefixed to the volume), is, that on the afternoon of the 13th of June, Mr Simpson shot two of his companions; that the other two mounted their horses and rejoined the larger party, a part of which went to the encampment, where Mr Simpson was alone, on the next morning; and that Mr Simpson's death then took place. Whether he shot these men in self-defence (for he had incurred the ill-will of the race), and was subsequently put to death by their companions, or whether the severe stretch to which his faculties had been subjected for several years brought on a temporary hallucination of mind, under the influence of which the melancholy event took place, is known only to God and to the surviving actors in that tragedy. Thus perished, before he had completed his thirty-second year, Thomas Simpson, a man of great ardour, resolution, and perseverance; one who had already achieved a great object, and who has left a name which will be classed by posterity with that of Cook, Parry, Lander, and Franklin."

KING RENE OF ANJOU.

In forming our estimate of a good sovereign, it is to be feared many of those virtues which adorn a private station weigh but lightly in the decision, if they do not actually tell against him. To René, king of Sicily and Jerusalem, Count of Anjou and Provence, known not only during his life, but through succeeding ages, as "the Good King René," this is peculiarly applicable. There never was a ruler more beloved during his life, or who left a memory more endeared to his subjects; yet historians have ever mentioned him rather with pity for his weakness than with respect for his virtues. And the picture drawn of him by Sir Walter Scott in "Anne of Geierstein," is but too correct as to character, though false in many of its historical features. The Great Wizard, too, has conjured up a very delusive picture of the latter days of his daughter, Queen Margaret [consort of our unfortunate Henry VI.], both as to the circumstances which attended the last days of that unfortunate lady, and the place of her death. To purchase the interest of his detestable nephew, Louis XI., with King Edward IV., in order to obtain the release of his captive daughter, Good King René sacrificed his possessions in Anjou and Provence, with the succession of Provence, Lorraine, and Bar. The kind-hearted monarch was, it is said, engaged in painting one of his pet partridges, for he was an amateur artist as well as a poet, when it was announced to him that his nephew required, as the price of his interference with England, the immediate surrender of the county of Anjou. With a sigh of sad regret at the idea of leaving a land to which he was attached, and a people by whom he was so well beloved, the affectionate old man gave his consent to the harsh demand—and continued his work; but it was in Anjou that he desired his body to be interred, and according to that request, his remains were deposited in the church of St Maurice, at Angers, where his tomb existed till the destruction of all such monuments in the revolutionary madness of 1793. Over the tomb was placed, by his particular desire, one of his own paintings, which was on oak, and represented a skeleton attired in royal robes, and be-

* From all discoveries which have yet been made in the icy regions of the Arctic Ocean, it seems evident that this passage can never be of any commercial utility, at least so long as the present Hyperborean temperature remains the same.

† Mr Simpson was a native of Dingwall, in Ross-shire, of which littleburgh his father had long exercised the functions of magistrate. He was born on the 2d of July 1806, was educated for the Scotch church, and took honours at the college of Aberdeen. In 1829 he entered the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, at the urgent request of Mr (now Sir George) Simpson, then governor of the Company's territories in America. On the knowledge of his discoveries reaching England in 1839, the Royal Geographical Society awarded to him their gold medal; but the honours never reached him; and on the same month in which he died, the British government intimated its intention of bestowing upon him a pension of £100 per annum, in testimony of his adventurous services.

neath it were eight Latin verses, also the composition of his majesty. The tomb and picture had been removed from the choir into the nave in 1783, when considerable alterations took place in the church; but all has been swept away by the destroyers in 1793; and though probably the painting was of no great merit as a specimen of art, yet, as the production of Good King René, it must be regretted. A specimen of his majesty's epitaph, but little known, still exists in the church of Nantilly, at Saumur; it is on his nurse!

Read composed also several works in French, and his songs in the provencal tongue have ranked him amongst the troubadours of his time. He was also a bird and rabbit fancier, reared many of those partridges called bartavelles, and introduced sundry varieties of rabbits; but we must forgive all these very unregal propensities, nay, even his bad verses and paintings, if it be true, as tradition tells us, that he introduced into our gardens the Provence roses and pinks; and that, amongst our fruits, we are indebted to him for the muscat grapes. As to his love for white peacocks, Solomon himself sent farther to seek such birds.

It was during the time of the king of Sicily and Jerusalem, that many curious customs were introduced into Anjou, which endured for many ages. Some of these tended materially to civilise the more northern Angelines; others were characteristic of René himself, and showed a singular mixture of folly and humanity; amongst them was one which existed in the small parish of Carbai, on the north side of the Loire. The lands in this parish had previously been held of the castle of Angers, on condition of the village furnishing in time of war twelve men for the garrison, and making a yearly payment of 12 poults and 100 bushels of oats. In one of his journeys through the county of Anjou, René was struck with the appearance of poverty in the inhabitants of Carbai, and released them from the payment of their annual tax, upon condition that yearly, upon Easter day, the villagers should elect, by a majority of votes, a king of Carbai. This ephemeral monarch was to be selected from amongst the young unmarried men, natives of the parish, and on his election, to be crowned with a diadem made of willow bark, and surmounted with hare's ears. With this royal emblem on his head, and stripped of all his other attire, he was to leap into the parish pond. Having then resumed his garments with his crown upon his head, and a white wand in his hand, he was to be escorted by all the young people of the parish to assist at the grand mass for the day; and after the mass, proclamations of various sorts were made in his name. The prior of the convent of Carbai was obliged to furnish this monarch of a day with lodgings and fire, five pounds of butter, and a frying-pan; the curé was to pray for him, and every family in the parish to contribute two eggs, on pain of having all their poultry confiscated to the use of the king of Carbai, in case of neglect; whilst every man in the parish who had been married during the past year, was to pay four deniers to the royal treasury, or to be ducked in the pond aforesaid. There existed, however, in this district other curious customs, not quite so free from mischief as this institution of Good King René's; for instance, in the faubourg of Montreuil, near Saumur, where there was a convent of Benedictines, whose garden being much inconvenienced at times by the waste water from a mill erected by one of the barons of Montreuil, the prior took the liberty of cutting the dam, by which great mischief was done; and the lord brought the master before the court, by whom the prior was found guilty of felony, and condemned to death, but, as an ecclesiastic, he obtained a commutation of his sentence, upon condition that the prior of the said convent should, from that time forth, and for evermore, be thrown into the stream on a certain day (Trinity Sunday) below the bridge over the river Thonet, and save himself as he could. This abominable folly was absolutely carried into effect during more than a century, the prior being paraded through the village on a donkey, with his face towards the tail, and shot into the river Thonet like a load of offal; men being, however, stationed to pull him out again. But at length one luckless prior was unfortunately drowned (perhaps fortunately for his successors); a new arrangement was then made, by which the Benedictines agreed to pay a heavy annual fine to the lord; but, in memory of the old custom, an effigy of the prior was annually ducked, after being paraded through the village, the mob shouting out, "Le part de Monsieur le Baron va jeter l'Abbé dans l'eau." This custom continued till the 18th century, great crowds attending, and spending the rest of the day in dancing and merry-making. Another custom of the same manor was, that when the lord took a fancy to repossess himself in his château of Gaillard, the vassals were to arrange themselves along the left bank of the river Thonet, and beat the water with their bats, leaving their employment, whatsoever it might be, under penalty of severe forfeiture in case of disobedience; and all for the purpose of quieting the frogs, for fear they should trouble the repose of Monsieur le Baron.

To return to the Good King René. His property, both in his southern provinces, as well as in Anjou and Touraine, passed, at his death, to the crown of

France; and the unfortunate Margaret, the uncrowned queen of England, was glad to accept the hospitality of one of her father's vassals, and closed her sad and eventful life, not in Provence, as Scott has represented, but in an obscure retreat in Anjou, which, from its very obscurity, has rendered the circumstances of her latter end nearly unknown and unrecorded. In the year 1480, after the death of her father, Margaret returned into Anjou, and took up her abode in the small château of Dampierre, near Saumur, with François de la Vignolle, an old and faithful servant of her father's house. Here, after a youth of the brightest hopes, and a maturity of the severest trials—having been present in twelve desperate and bloody conflicts—having seen her unfortunate husband hurled from his throne—the heir of all her hopes and only object of her maternal affections brutally murdered by his enemies—her friends all butchered in the field or on the scaffold, she returned to the home of her youth to witness the utter ruin of her family, and see her father despoiled of all the possessions of his ancestors. Deserted by all but the faithful servant to whose hospitality she was indebted for her last refuge on earth, her body wasted by anxiety and suffering, after two years' illness, she expired on the 25th of August 1482, in the humble mansion at Dampierre, and was buried in the church of St. Maurice at Angers, in the same tomb with her father and his second wife, Joan de la Val, whose effigies remained till the fatal level of 1793 passed over the land. The fate of Queen Margaret, so bright in its early dawn, and so cloudy in its close, was but too common to the race of Plantagenet in those days, and has found singular parallels in our own. How promising at his birth was the future fate of Edward, prince of Wales, the grandson of the conquering Henry V., and the heir of all his honours! how bloody was its early termination in the field by Tewkebury! Edward V., next prince of Wales, seemed born to as high a destiny, and met with as dark an end. The only son of Richard III. fell an early victim to disease, and the same fate attended Arthur, prince of Wales, the next heir-apparent to the English crown. Thus four successive princes, born, as it seemed, to empire, and on whom seemed to hang the destinies of England, before they had reached maturity, were gone to the land where all things are forgotten. There are many now alive who heard the shouts of joy which hailed the birth of an heir to Louis XVI., more who heard the whispers of his mysterious fate at the time when he disappeared from the scene of life. From the Belgian frontiers to the shores of the Mediterranean, on the 20th of March 1811, the roar of ten thousand cannon told the world that the emperor had a son and heir—the king of Rome, on whose cradle the fate of nations depended. When he died an exile in his mother's land, the event was felt through France perhaps as something of importance, but the world was as little affected in its interests as if a peasant boy had died. The birth of Henri duc de Bourdeaux, or King Henry V., as his partisans love to style him, once more gave France a holiday. What are now his chances of empire? For the Count de Paris—the hope of France to-day—who shall predict his fate?

OCCASIONAL NOTE.

FLOATING THE PERSON.

It cannot be too extensively known, that the fatal consequences of shipwreck, and other accidents at sea, as well as in pleasure-sailing and skating, may be prevented, in a great number of instances, by a very simple apparatus. Various plans for increasing the natural buoyancy of the body, so as to keep the head above water on such occasions, have been devised and acted upon, and we propose now to pass them in review before our readers.

Perhaps one of the oldest expedients of the kind is Andrew's Cork Swimming Belt. Mr Andrew resides in Manchester, and it is between thirty and forty years since he first invented the belt which bears his name. We regret to find him stating that he has lost much more in endeavouring to bring his invention into notice, than he has ever gained by it. His belt is handsomely formed, and makes no pretension to be passable for anything else; but it appears fully qualified to perform the duty expected from it, and of this, indeed, we have had full proof presented to our own observation. The belt brought under our notice is sufficient to inclose the body of ordinary thickness; it is of cotton cloth, and is furnished with tape straps to go over the arms, and a leather strap and buckle at the ends. The floating material consists of five square masses of cork, of the thickness of a couple of inches, inclosed within the cloth, and weighing in all forty-five ounces. The retail price of the best kind of belt is twelve-and-sixpence.

Very nearly resembling this in form is Mackintosh's Swimming Belt, composed of air-proof cloth, a material obviously applicable to this purpose, and having one important recommendation; namely, that any inflatable article made from it is capable of being reduced to a small and portable form. The belt, seven or eight inches broad, and capable of being strapped in the usual way round the body, contains two or more air-tight spaces, and has a tube through which these may be inflated. An ordinary sized man

with one of these belts round his body, does not sink in water below the armpits.

An ingenious variation upon the belt has been devised by a private gentleman of our own city, in the form of a cape. The object in view was to place the floating power in an article of dress which might be worn at any time when exposed to danger—for instance, in skating—without necessarily attracting attention. The cape goes round the neck as usual, while its lower parts are attached to the body by straps, so as to be insured against turning up in the water, in which case the head would nearly sink, and the object be defeated. The Edinburgh Skating Club have practically, and the Edinburgh Humane Society have, by recommendation, patronised this invention. It has the advantage of not presenting air-tight cloth too near to the skin.

A jacket, invented by Mr Donaldson, of the Albion Cloth Company, Edinburgh, seems perfectly qualified to float the human figure, is unobtrusive in form, and has one peculiarity of an important kind—which, however, could be adapted to other safety-flots—in presenting two inflatable spaces, with separate tubes, so that, if one were burst or torn by accident, the other would stand good, and be sufficient to sustain the body. In this case, the air-tight spaces are arranged on the back and in front, so as not to interfere with the arms. As these spaces alone are of air-proof cloth, the inventor considers his jacket free from the objection which might be made to it as calculated to repress perspiration. It has been proved that a person wearing one of these jackets, fully inflated, in water, could easily keep up another person.

Another suggestion strikes us as extremely pertinent, that in passenger vessels the pillows should be of air-proof cloth, so that, with straps, each might serve to float one person. A pattern of such a pillow may be seen in the possession of the secretary of the Edinburgh Humane Society; where, it may be mentioned, we have also seen the Safety-Cape.

The lamentable loss of life by the sinking of the Pegasus in the month of July, has forcibly called public attention to these and similar means of sustaining human beings in the water on particular exigencies. There can, we think, be no doubt that any one of the articles above-described would prove the means of saving a life in such circumstances. It often must happen that all that is wanting to save a person in shipwreck is merely the means of keeping a short while afloat. He may thus be enabled to swim or drift safely to the shore, or he may be kept up in the water till succour arrives. The object may be accomplished either by each person wearing an article capable of floating him, or by having a larger floating article, of which a number of persons might take hold, so as to sustain themselves. An inflated air-proof bag, of the size of the piece of furniture called an ottoman, would easily sustain a dozen persons, who might be thus towed through a calm sea to land. An ingenious improvement on this plan has been suggested, namely, to have, in the interior of the bag, a closed vessel containing compressed air: this, being let out into the bag, would instantly inflate it, and thus preclude the necessity of the difficult and tedious process of blowing up so large a receptacle by the mouth.

It can scarcely be necessary, at such a time as the present, to point out the moral duty not only of recommending the general adoption of such means of saving life, but that of avoiding all sneering or scoffing at such expedients, seeing how little ridicule will prevent a sensitive person from appearing cautious about his personal safety. On this point we can relate a rather remarkable anecdote, the truth of which may be depended upon. Two gentlemen, fitting themselves out for a voyage to the United States, respectively purchased clothes to a considerable amount at a wareroom in this city. One of them, seeing Mackintosh's swimming belts, and appreciating their use, added one to his purchases: the other gentleman only indulged in a jest at his friend's caution. They embarked a few days after (January 1839) in the Pennsylvania American liner, which was stranded next morning in a gale on the North Bank at the mouth of the Mersey. The crew and passengers were taken off in the life-boat, but it was overwhelmed in the surf, when the whole perished excepting one person, "Mr Thomson of New York," the individual who had purchased the life-preserving apparatus, his scoffing friend being of course among the sufferers.

In such a case as the burning of the Kent East Indian, when it was necessary to transport between six and seven hundred persons to another vessel in the midst of a high, though not stormy sea, the use of life-preservers would be of great service. On that occasion many fell into the sea and were drowned, in consequence of the difficulty of slinging them into the boats; all of these would have been saved if they had had swimming-belts. Another illustration of the utility of these articles, even more striking than that above related, may here be given. On the occasion of the wreck of the Trafalgar, at a place called Green Point, in Table Bay, near the Cape of Good Hope, 21st February 1839, there was but one safety-belt on board: it belonged to a passenger, who had purchased it three months before in Manchester, being one of Mr Andrew's kind, and made of cork. The shore being rocky and the surf heavy, the people on shore could not come off to the rescue of those in the vessel, but called out to "send a rope ashore by a piece of wood." A rope was lashed to the half-deck ladder,

but it did not float towards land. A sailor then offered to swim ashore if the safety-belt were put upon him, which was agreed to by its owner. He got safe to land. The people on shore then returned a boat fastened to the rope, and in about ten or twelve trips, the whole were saved! In this instance there was no room for doubt that, but for the single safety-belt, a watery grave would have been the portion of every individual on board.

MONUMENTAL SCULPTURES AND INSCRIPTIONS OF EGYPT.

FIRST ARTICLE.

THE monuments of the old Egyptians surpass in magnitude and sublimity those of every other nation, ancient or modern. The imagination of the beholder sinks, overawed and powerless, at the contemplation of those magnificent temples and palaces, which are larger than some modern cities. It was on the plain of Thebes, beneath its gorgeous archways and gigantic colonnades, that Champollion, in the excited language of astonishment, exclaimed, "These porticos must be the work of men one hundred feet in height!" He added—"Imagination sinks abashed at the foot of the 140 columns of the hypostyle hall of Karnak." It was there, also, that Belzoni, in the fervour of enthusiasm, exclaimed, "I have at least lived one day! It appeared to me," he says, "like entering a city of giants, who, after a long conflict, were all destroyed, leaving the ruins of their various temples as the only proofs of their former existence." One of the most remarkable circumstances connected with these works of art, is the combination of extreme freshness and extreme antiquity which they present. Moisture, the great agent in decomposition, being almost entirely absent from the atmosphere of Egypt, the exposure of many centuries has produced no visible change on these monuments of ancient days. Not only do many of the monuments themselves retain much of their original sharpness and high polish, but the sculptures and inscriptions on them remain unaltered; even the paintings that cover the walls of temples, which have been for the most part roofless for nearly two thousand years, still remain undefaced, and in many instances are as fresh as when the colours were newly laid on. It has been stated by an able writer on this subject, that, on first surveying the immense cavern temple at Ipsambul, in Nubia, which is of far earlier date than even the monuments of Egypt, "the spectator might well imagine that the artists were still at work in it. It is impossible that the white of the walls can at any time have been purer or more perfect, the outlines of the figures sharper, or the colours more brilliant, than now; and this impression is strengthened when he comes to that part of it where the tracings and first outlines show that this great work was never finished. But the black dust that, to the depth of many inches, covers the rocky floor on which he treads, and into which the doors, the door-posts, and internal fittings of the temple, have long since corroded and mouldered, soon convinces him of his mistake, by showing him demonstrably, how many ages have rolled away since the hands by which these wonders were accomplished have been motionless in the grave."

The walls of these Egyptian temples, as well as of the immense catacombs where the dead are deposited, are covered over with sculptures, portraying with great spirit and fidelity colossal figures of gods and kings, battles, sieges, and victories, religious and triumphal processions, with long lines of captives of the different conquered nations. The private as well as the public life of the people is depicted in these scenes; their knowledge of the arts and sciences, their modes of life, their ordinary pursuits and trades, the operations of agriculture and of the pastoral life, the various processes of the mechanical arts, the amusements of hunting, fowling, or fishing, song, music, and dancing, the arts of sculpture and painting, all are represented with every appearance of minute fidelity in pictures of which, not merely the outlines, but the colours, have withstood the destructive influences of thirty centuries. The design of these pictorial representations of the ancient Egyptians, was very different from that of modern paintings. Their object was not to excite the imagination, or to communicate pleasure, but to inform the understanding, and convey facts. Clearness of idea, therefore, not pictorial effect, was what the Egyptian painters and sculptors chiefly studied. Hence, if their representations of objects distinctly conveyed their meaning, they seem to have attempted nothing further. We find, therefore, their representations of nature exhibiting great inequalities. Some of their sketches are made with great accuracy, others in a very rude and imperfect manner. Sometimes—for example, when it was the object of the artist merely to give the image of a man, as distinguished from other animated beings—the details of the human form are very imperfectly given; while, in the same group, the birds are executed with great fidelity and spirit, in order that the kind of bird intended might be clearly specified. But when the design was to dis-

tinguish between the different races of the human family, or between one monarch and another, the figures are drawn with great accuracy. It is evident, indeed, that the Egyptians excelled in portrait-painting, and we cannot but look with wonder and profound interest on the portrait gallery of the Pharaohs of Egypt, from the remotest ages of the monarchy, down to the Christian era, exhibited in the engravings of Rosellini's great work. They present a remarkable variety, both in expression of character and in features, which exhibit almost every gradation of outline, from the low receding forehead, thick lips, and flat nose of the negro, to an almost Grecian symmetry of countenance. The portrait of the Pharaoh who made Joseph ruler over all the land of Egypt, is given with the accuracy of the coin profiles of our own gracious sovereign. The portrait of the great Sesostris is a hundred times repeated on the monuments, till we are made as familiar with it as with the portrait of Napoleon. We see, in this procession of the kings of former days, the portrait of that haughty Pharaoh who pursued the chosen people through the Red Sea, and with all his host "sank like lead in the mighty waters." We see the sculptured images of Shishak, the father-in-law of Solomon, and the conqueror of his son Rehoboam; of Pharaoh Nocho, who slew Josiah, and carried his son captive into Egypt; and of the perfidious Pharaoh Hophra, who excited the Jews to rebel against Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and then abandoned them to their fate. Nor are we without specimens of royal female beauty, extending in long continued series, though frequently broken and interrupted, from the negro wife of the first Amenoph, the founder of the magnificent eighteenth dynasty, down to her for whom "the world was well lost." The most beautiful portrait is one which startled Champollion, according to his own confession, by its remarkable loveliness, and is supposed to represent the Egyptian wife of Solomon. It is the portrait of a lady who, by any connoisseurs or artists of any period, would be pronounced of consummate beauty.

Recent times had seen much done to explore and describe the ancient buildings of Egypt; and many, the existence of which was not previously known, had been discovered, buried in some instances beneath a soil which appeared to have long been undisturbed. Their value in illustrating the early condition of an interesting portion of mankind was acknowledged; but this was conceived to be much less than it might be, if the inscriptions accompanying the sculptures and paintings could be explained. Mystery had rested over these inscriptions even in the days of Rome's greatness, though it was then generally supposed that they contained a summary of important truths known only to the priests of ancient Egypt. The nature of the inscriptions readily shows how they were at once profoundly difficult of explanation, and tantalising to human curiosity. They were not expressed in alphabetical characters, but in an extensive series of actual objects, natural and artificial, which have been found to represent each some particular idea, or else some sound entering into the composition of the language. Such are the famous *hieroglyphics*, as they have been termed, from Greek words signifying *sacred engravings*. The difficulty of deciphering these inscriptions was increased by the ignorance in which we were left as to the language which they were meant to represent. It was not till the beginning of the present century, that Jablonsky—and after him Quatremère, in his interesting work on the language and literature of Egypt—demonstrated that the language of ancient Egypt was the same as the Coptic or modern ecclesiastical language of the same country. This fact having been ascertained, one great obstacle to the deciphering of the hieroglyphic inscriptions was removed, and the key of these mysterious symbols, so long sought for in vain, was at length discovered, in consequence of the accidental disinterment of a single block of stone which for ages had lain under ground. During the memorable French expedition to Egypt, a huge block of black basalt was found by a division of the troops in digging the foundation of Fort St Julian, near Rosetta. This monument subsequently fell into the hands of the English, who deposited it in the British Museum, where it has long been familiar to the public under the name of the Rosetta stone. It exhibits the remains of three inscriptions, one below the other; the first is in hieroglyphics; the second in the character called in the inscription itself *enchorial*, or writing of the country; and the third in Greek. The Greek inscription was deciphered by the celebrated scholars Porson and Heyne, and ascertained to be a decree of the priests of Egypt, conferring divine honours upon Ptolemy Epiphane. This discovery gave a powerful impulse to the study of the hieroglyphics. It was supposed, and with good reason, that each of the three inscriptions contained nearly the same sense, and that each was probably a version of the other. Several continental scholars, especially the illustrious Baron Sylvestre de Sacy, and M. Akerblad, devoted themselves with great zeal to the study of the two Egyptian inscriptions, and succeeded in demonstrating that the Greek was really a translation, and by a careful comparison of the different characters, extracted from them the rudiments

* Demotic signifies "popular," or "belonging to the people," and is the term employed by Herodotus to designate the kind of writing commonly employed by the Egyptians. He states that they used two kinds of characters, the one denominated *hieras*, sacred, the other *demotic*, popular. The former, which is identical with the hieroglyphic writing, was said by the classic writers (as its Greek name imports) to be known to the priests only.

† "An Account of Some Recent Discoveries in Hieroglyphical Literature," p. 53.

was found on the Rosetta stone, and had there been shown by Dr Young to contain the name of Ptolemy. Supposing this to be correct, the other ring would necessarily contain the name of Cleopatra, as the inscription on the base of the obelisk expressly referred to these two personages. On examination, it was found that the group referred to contained a name composed in part of the same letters with the name of Ptolemy, and followed by the sign of the feminine gender. The three letters common to both —P, T, and L—were represented in the female name by the same signs as occurred for them in the king's; there could, therefore, be no reasonable ground to doubt that, as the one hieroglyphic group designated Ptolemy, so the other must contain the name of his consort. The merit of this discovery has been claimed both by Champollion and by Mr Banks.

Subsequent discoveries have gradually enlarged, and at length completed, the Egyptian alphabet; so that we are now in possession of the means of deciphering not only the Greek and Latin names hieroglyphically expressed, but also the names, titles, and exploits of the successive dynasties of Pharaohs who had ruled in Egypt from the days of Abraham and Moses. These interesting discoveries gave a powerful impulse to research into the antiquities of Egypt, and that country was visited by travellers from all the nations of Europe, for the sole purpose of studying the hieroglyphic inscriptions on the walls of the monuments themselves. In the year 1828, the governments of France and Tuscany appointed each a commission for the purpose of examining and making drawings of the hieroglyphic inscriptions engraved on the monuments, public and private, of Egypt and Nubia. The French commission was under the direction of the celebrated Champollion, and the Tuscan of Dr Rosellini, professor of history and antiquities in the university of Pisa. With them were associated a number of draftsmen and architects, who were abundantly supplied with the instruments necessary for the advancement of the object they had in view. The expedition remained in Egypt for upwards of two years, during which they were unremittingly engaged in exploring the monuments scattered along the valley of the Nile. They brought back with them a very large collection of antiquities, and not less than fifteen hundred drawings, together with a particular description, drawn out on the spot, of every monument in Egypt and Nubia, containing the subject of each bas-relief, the detail of the decorations, and copies of the accompanying inscriptions. The death of Champollion soon after his return to Paris, threw the entire task of arranging the materials thus accumulated, and preparing them for publication, upon Rosellini, who has acquitted himself of it in a manner in the highest degree creditable to his industry and learning. His splendid work, published at Pisa by the Tuscan government, supplies an invaluable mass of materials for investigation and research; and we purpose giving from it a few examples of the light which has thus been thrown on various important questions connected with the history and manners of the ancient Egyptians. In the meantime, we shall give a brief account of the system of writing in use among the early inhabitants of Egypt, as elucidated by the laborious investigations of the learned writers above-mentioned. There is a well known passage in the Stromata of Clement of Alexandria, which treats of this subject in detail; but the statements of this author are so obscure and difficult, that it was not until after the discoveries we have described, that his meaning could be at all understood. The passage in question, however, has rendered essential service to the study of the hieroglyphics, by corroborating the results at which Champollion and Dr Young had arrived. According to Clement, the Egyptians employed three different systems of writing, and existing remains confirm this account. These are the *epitographic*, or current hand; the *hieratic*, or the character used by the priests; and the *hieroglyphic*, or monumental character.* The first is equivalent to the demotic or enchorial, of which we have already spoken; and as no documents in this mode of writing are known which bear an earlier date than that of the Ptolemies, the conclusion has been very generally arrived at, that it is of comparatively modern origin. The second is a running form of the hieroglyphics, in which a rude outline represents the figures, and which occurs in the manuscripts found in the tombs of Egypt. The third was the original mode of Egyptian writing, of which the other two are corruptions. It is wholly composed of pictorial representations, and conveys ideas partly by direct imitation, partly by symbolic characters, and partly also by arbitrary signs. Originally, there can be no doubt, hieroglyphic writing represented ideas entirely by pictures of the object intended to be expressed. Thus, we find on the monuments that the picture of a man represents a man, and that of a horse, a horse.† But this mode of communicating ideas is necessarily very limited and imperfect, and could express only a small portion of that which occurs to the

mind. Hence, in all probability, has arisen the necessity of using symbolic or figurative characters; that is, characters representing the form of one object, and conveying the idea of another, as when courage is represented by a lion, and a crown is put for its wearer. The Egyptians seem to have effected this in various ways. Sometimes a part is put for the whole. Thus two arms, the one with a shield, the other with a battle-axe, denote an army, and a pair of arms holding an ear, signifies rarer. The effect is often put for the cause, the cause for the effect, and the instrument for the work produced. Thus, the picture of the sun denotes the day, of which it is the cause; fire is represented by smoke issuing from a chafing dish, and letters by the materials employed in writing. Sometimes the symbol is employed in consequence of some fancied resemblance between it and the idea. Thus, contemplation or vision is denoted by the eye of the hawk, because that bird was supposed to possess the power of gazing upon the sun. A bee signifies a people obedient to a king, because that insect submits to a regular government; justice was symbolised by an ostrich feather, because all the feathers in the wing of that bird are equal; and a palm branch signifies the year, because it was supposed that this tree grew twelve branches every year, and one every month. In some cases the emblem used must be considered completely arbitrary. Thus, Osiris is represented by a throne and eye; a son by a bird resembling a goose; a physician by that species of aquatic bird which utters a sound most unmusical to medical ears. This brief account of the hieroglyphic system of writing may serve to give our readers some idea of the nature of the pictorial representations sculptured on the Egyptian monuments.

ZILLAH—THE ONLY CHILD.

VARIOUS are the lessons that may be learned from what we happen to witness in our daily walks. Joy and sorrow, toil and luxury, meet the eye in rapid succession, as we traverse the streets of a great city. Scarcely has the sprightly maiden of sixteen summers gladdened our path, than it is overshadowed by the lonely widow in her garb of wo. The exhilarating effect of the rosy face and springing step of a merry child, is suddenly checked by the sight of the white hair and stooping gait of an aged man. The weary labourer and the gay man of fashion, the lowly mendicant and the high-born dame, may be seen side by side; all pass on their way, some to scenes of pleasure, others to those of misery.

But amidst the different objects which suggest serious reflections in the mind of an observant pedestrian, few afford a wider field for contemplation than the frequent removals, which we cannot fail to notice as we go through the several quarters of the metropolis. The upholsterer's cart, laden with costly furniture, and the humble truck which bears away the homely chattels of the working-man, have each a history connected with them. Happiness is not always packed up with the magnificence of the former; nor is discontent the invariable companion of the latter. Such were my thoughts one day when walking through one of the fine squares of London many years ago. A handsome house attracted my attention, from the circumstance of there being a large wagon at the door; and between the windows of the ground-floor were printed notices, announcing that in a few days there would be a sale. An air of sadness was visible on the countenances of the domestics, as they moved to and fro with different pieces of furniture, which they deposited in the wagon; and as I stood for a moment reading the printed notice, I heard one of them say, "No, no, Will, that's not to go—it is to be sold. Master couldn't bear to see it." I looked hastily round, and beheld a pretty little table—such as the French call a *bonheur du jour*—surmounted by a small bookcase, opening with glass doors, which were lined with green silk.

Now, I do not consider that it is necessary for a writer to state how he acquires his information, or collects his stories. These are the secrets of his art; and having promised this, I shall simply relate the history of the little work-table, or rather of its owner, the beautiful Zillah.

She was an only child, and, as may be supposed, a beloved one. Reared in the midst of luxury, her every wish anticipated and gratified, she grew up without the slightest idea of the necessity of practising self-control. She was generous and affectionate, intelligent and accomplished, and her sweet countenance often proved an excuse in the eyes of indulgent friends for her waywardness and self-will. Sometimes when Zillah proposed some wild scheme, her gentle mother would venture to remonstrate, but had not firmness to resist the playful embrace and merry laugh of her idolised daughter; so that the latter invariably succeeded in obtaining the fulfilment of her wishes, were they ever so extravagant. Zillah had attained her eighteenth year, and several suitors had aspired to her hand. Her parents did not attempt to control her choice, until they discovered that it had been decided in favour of an individual, whom they had frequently met in society, and whose disposition

and principles were, in their opinion, ill calculated to insure her happiness.

For the first time the indulged Zillah met with opposition from her father and mother, and her lover was forbidden their house. Irritated by this unusual, and, in her estimation, harsh exercise of parental authority, the inconsiderate self-willed girl secretly left her home, and those who had so tenderly cherished her from the hour she first saw the light, and contracted a hasty marriage with one of whom she knew but little. Before her departure, she placed in the work-table above-mentioned a short letter to her parents, informing them of the step she was about to take, and her determination to become the wife of Mr —.

When the news of Zillah's flight was communicated to her mother, she was struck with grief and alarm, and for some time remained weeping over the little *bonheur du jour* with the letter in her hand. She was found in this attitude by her husband, whose indignation overpowered his paternal affection, and he declared that no intreaties should ever make him hold any intercourse with his ungrateful child. For two long years he kept his resolution, and resisted the tears and pleadings of his wife; and at length forbade any one to mention Zillah's name in his presence. Indeed the sight of anything which had belonged to her caused such violent paroxysms of anger, that it was alarming to witness them. The afflicted mother was therefore compelled to conceal the deep sorrow which was undermining her health, for she durst not speak of the cause of her grief. She knew that her husband mourned in secret also, although his sterner nature would not allow him to confess it; and she still cherished the hope, that by patiently yielding to his commands, he would in time consent to a reconciliation with their unhappy child.

At last some friends of the family persuaded the distressed parents to remove from their house in town, and reside in the country, trusting that a complete change of scene might be of service. It was at this juncture that the removal of the furniture, described at the commencement of this tale, took place; and it will now be understood by the reader why the little work-table was to be sold.

But it is time to speak of its once happy possessor. Immediately after her marriage, she accompanied her husband to Paris, and, for some months, the young couple appeared to be free from all care, and to be devoted to each other. Zillah's affection was true and disinterested; she had proved this, at the expense of every dutiful feeling towards her parents; but, alas! that affection was unworthily bestowed.

Mr — was proud of his youthful wife's grace and beauty, but his heart was too much absorbed by avarice to love any human being. He knew she was an only child, and reputed to be a great heiress. Seeing that she was artless and generous, he wrought upon her noble nature, by representing that his want of an adequate fortune was the sole cause of her parents' opposition to their union.

If Zillah had not been blinded by a misplaced affection, she would instantly have repelled such an unjust assertion, for she must have known that her father and mother were incapable of placing any mere worldly advantages in competition with her happiness. Alas! she was destined soon to discover that their reasons for refusing to sanction her marriage were but too just, and that she had been deceived by empty professions of love; for when her husband found that his wife's wealthy parents persevered in refusing to hold the slightest communication with her—that letters, soliciting pardon, were returned unopened—and that the fortune he had imagined she would inherit was made over to a distant branch of the family, his conduct towards her completely changed. Then the unhappy Zillah began to experience the most cruel neglect from the only being to whom she had a right to look up for protection and tenderness: then she was left alone for hours, to weep over her filial disobedience; and when her husband found her beautiful countenance pale and altered from the effects of grief, he would coldly turn away, without uttering a word of consolation; or else he would upbraid her for making his home miserable.

It was in the second year of this most unfortunate marriage, and Zillah was sitting beside the little bed of her infant child, thinking of her once happy home, of her indulgent father and gentle mother, when the clocks of the gay city, striking the hour of midnight, recalled her wandering thoughts. She rose, and opening the window, looked out into the street, hoping to catch a glimpse of her husband, who had been absent, as usual, for many hours. All was still; the moon shed a clear placid light on every object. Zillah fixed her tearful eyes on the beautiful orb, and thought of the mansions of the blest. She prayed for strength to bear her sorrows, and humbled herself before Him who looks upon the lowly and the contrite with tender compassion.

At length the sound of carriage wheels met the ear of the anxious wife, and she soon perceived a hackney coach at the end of the street. As it approached, her heart beat violently, and an indefinable sensation of fear suddenly assailed her. The vehicle stopped at the large *porte cochere* of the house, and the porter was summoned to open the gate.

Zillah hastily closed the window, and waited tremulously for the arrival of her husband, whom she now heard slowly ascending the stairs.

* Encyclopaedia Britannica. Article Hieroglyphics—Antiquities of Egypt, p. 66.

† The book, or rather roll, spoken of in the Revelations of St John, which was written within and on the back, and sealed with seven seals, evidently contained hieroglyphics, or pictorial representations of this kind. "And I saw, when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and behold a white horse, and he that sat on him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him."—Rev. vi. 1, 2.

* Has this fact any connection with the derivation of the word "quack?" We throw out the hint for the consideration of etymologists.

When he entered the room, she was alarmed at the expression of his countenance. His eyes were sunken, and his face deadly pale. It was evident that he was ill.

"You are suffering, dear Richard," exclaimed Zillah tenderly, for at that moment all the affectionate emotions of her young heart, which he had so often slighted and rejected, returned. "O tell me what is the matter!"

"I am ill, Zillah," replied he in a hollow voice, and taking her small hand, he pressed it against his burning forehead.

"We will have advice instantly," cried she, and immediately despatched the porter for a physician, who speedily arrived, and pronounced the patient to be labouring under the distressing symptoms of a low fever.

For many a long day and weary night did Zillah watch by the sick-bed of her husband, nursing him with the most tender care, and forgetting all his past unkindness at the sight of his sufferings. His malady terminated fatally, and poor Zillah was left a widow, in a foreign land, and without friends; for peculiar circumstances had prevented the young couple from forming any acquaintances in Paris, who might have been useful to them. The only drop of comfort in the youthful widow's cup of sorrow was the reflection, that her husband had appreciated her affectionate attentions, and had asked her forgiveness for the troubles his selfishness had brought upon her.

Zillah mourned for her departed husband with the deepest sorrow, for she had loved him with all the disinterested tenderness of a woman's heart. She recalled the days when she first knew him, when he had gained her youthful affections by his apparent devotedness to her, and his promises of unchangeable regard. All these recollections were attended with painful thoughts of her parents, and of the desolate condition of herself and infant daughter; and it was only by resorting to the highest of all sources of consolation, that she was enabled to support her heavy afflictions.

In order to obtain medical assistance, and to defray the funeral expenses, Zillah had (through the instrumentality of a worthy nurse, who had sometimes shared her long watchings) disposed of all the valuables she possessed, and she was now nearly penniless. It was with a breaking heart that she once more sat down to write to her father. Alas! the letter was returned to her through the post office; marked as it was by the ensigns of woe, it had not been opened by her parents. This circumstance almost overwhelmed her, and she gazed on her innocent child in an agony of grief. In the hope that her father would relent, and send her some pecuniary aid, the afflicted widow had suffered the rent of her apartments to accumulate, and the proprietress was now impatient for payment. She sent for her, however, and implored her to wait a little longer. The woman reluctantly consented to wait for her money, but she told the unhappy Zillah, most decidedly, that she must quit the house on the following day.

The morning came, and Zillah packed up the few articles she possessed, which principally consisted of her baby's clothes, for she had been compelled to part with most of her own, and having locked the small trunk, she seated herself upon it, and burst into tears. Those tears were such as angels rejoice to see, for they were shed by a sincere penitent. After a while, the desolate widow drew from her pocket a little bible, the gift of her beloved mother. She opened the sacred volume, and, falling on her knees, read some of the blessed promises which abound in its inspired pages. Strengthened and comforted, she remained for some time in her humble attitude, her face buried in her hands. When she rose, she perceived the proprietress of the house standing gazing upon her.

The woman had entered the apartment with the view of hastening the departure of her poor lodger, but was diverted from her purpose by the sight of the widow on her knees. The timid glance which responded to her astonished gaze touched the heart of the landlady, and she said in a gentle tone, "You are well, madame, I hope!"

Zillah thanked her for the inquiry, and added, pointing at the same time towards the bed, "As soon as my child awakes, I will go; but—" And here her voice failed her, for she knew not whither she should direct her steps.

The landlady turned away, and, for once, forgot her rigid maxims in her sympathy for the beautiful and patient creature before her. At last she said, "Have you no friends, madame, in England, to whom you could write and state your situation? If you have, and would like to occupy a small room in another part of my house, you are welcome to stay here until you get an answer."

What a load seemed to be removed from poor Zillah's mind by this proposal! Gladly was it accepted, though just then she knew not to whom to write.

"And now, madame," resumed the landlady, seating herself with an air of protection and good humour, "it strikes me that you might employ your talents, and so gain a little money."

"I should be glad to do so," replied Zillah, "but in what manner?"

"Give lessons in your own language, and in music," returned the proprietress; "even royal folks have so employed themselves, before now, in foreign parts."

"I am most willing," said Zillah; and it was then

agreed that the widow should remove immediately to the small room, and that the landlady should endeavour to procure some pupils for her.

Zillah now felt a cheerfulness of spirit to which she had been long a stranger. She took possession of her new abode with a grateful heart, and occupied herself in arranging the humble furniture in the most commodious way, and in forming plans for the profitable employment of her time. One day, as she was dressing her little girl, singing all the while a simple English air, in order to amuse the sprightly child, the porter of the house knocked at the door of the modest apartment. The widow opened it, and the man put a letter into her hand, saying, "Forty sous, madame, if you please."

"Forty sous for a letter! it must be from England," thought the agitated Zillah, and then she remembered that she had scarcely so much as that sum. The porter marked the expression of the widow's countenance; he was a kind-hearted old man, and he said rapidly, "Madame need not pay for it now; it is of no consequence, and I am in a great hurry."

He then ran down stairs as briskly as a youth of twenty, and his heart was as light too. He "would sooner lose three times the sum," he said to his wife, "than give a moment's pain to such a sweet young lady." And, to the credit of his spouse be it recorded, she quite agreed with him.

"Besides," added the good woman, by way of consolation, "I do not think madame is likely to have many letters."

But we must leave the good-natured porters, and return to poor Zillah. With a trembling hand she opened the letter. It was from her mother's cousin, an aged lady, to whom the afflicted widow had written immediately after her husband's death: by some accident, Zillah's letter had wandered out of its course, and thus the answer also had been delayed. Zillah had long abandoned all hope of hearing from this venerable relative, and feared she was dead; for she felt sure that her appeal for succour would not have been left unnoticed, if it had reached the hands of her cousin. The letter which she now perused proved how justly she had appreciated the kind old lady's disposition, for it was full of tender and soothing expressions, and contained a remittance of fifty pounds, with an earnest recommendation to Zillah to return to England immediately, and take up her abode at the house of her benevolent cousin.

Zillah thought her heart would burst, from the effect of sudden joy, and she was obliged to put the letter aside for a few moments, and speak to her child, in order to recover herself. At length a flood of tears came to her relief. As she now listened to the sound of approaching footsteps, how different were her sensations to what they would have been an hour before! Then she would have dreaded lest the landlady had repented of her permission for her to remain in the house, and a thousand other vague fears would have taken possession of her sensitive mind. But now she wished to see the proprietress, to tell her the good news, to thank her for her kindness, for Zillah quite forgot that she had met with anything else from her. It was, then, with an elastic step and smiling face that she answered the summons at the door of her humble chamber; but instead of the landlady, she was greeted by a little sprightly lass, the good porter's daughter, who presented to Zillah a covered cup, saying, as she did so, "Maman begs madame will take this little chocolate; it is very good, and maman has just made it on purpose for madame."

A bright drop rested for a moment on the long dark eyelashes of the young widow, and then it fell on the extended hand of the little French maiden as she held the cup towards her. The child possessed all the tact of her nation, and took no notice of this evidence of some strong feeling, but began to caress the infant whom Zillah held in her arms. "Ah, how pretty she is, madame," said the good-natured girl; "what sweet blue eyes she has!" Zillah smiled through her tears, and said, "Thank you, my little Angelique; and pray, tell your mother that I am much obliged to her, and that I accept her kind offering with pleasure." "But madame must take it directly, while it is quite hot," replied the child, "or it will not be so nice." So saying, she was hastily descending the stairs, when Zillah called her back, and begged that she would request the landlady to come to speak to her as soon as convenient.

When Angelique re-entered her mother's lodge, and had delivered the messages intrusted to her, she added, "The lady shed tears, maman, when she took the cup out of my hand."

"Did she?" said the portress. "Poor young creature, she has heard of some fresh troubles, perhaps, in that letter; but run, tell madame that she is wanted up stairs."

The landlady soon presented herself, and Zillah communicated to her the pleasing change in her affairs. The intelligence was received with great satisfaction; and, to do her justice, it was not merely the prospect of obtaining the payment of the money owing to herself that produced this emotion. She was really and truly pleased that Zillah was thus relieved from her troubles—for she thought only of pecuniary ones—and she apologised for the harshness she had formerly been guilty of, quite as much from a sense of regret as from that of shame.

We must pass over the details of Zillah's movements, and hasten her return to her native land.

Before leaving Paris, however, she had the pleasure of testifying her gratitude to the worthy porter and his wife for their sympathy in her hour of need. The poor people shed tears as they bade her adieu, and Angelique waved her handkerchief until she could no longer see the carriage.

Travelling was not so expeditions in those times as it is now, and many days elapsed before Zillah and her little Ellen found themselves in London. It was late in the evening when they arrived at their cousin Mildred's residence. The old lady left her seat at the drawing-room window, where she had been watching for them, and hastened down stairs to receive the widow and her child. No words were spoken by either party, but they clasped each other in their arms, and wept. At last Mrs Mildred disengaged herself from Zillah, and turned towards Ellen, who, attracted by the lights and bustle, was laughing and clapping her little hands.

"She is a beauty!" exclaimed cousin Mildred, taking the merry infant from the servant who held her.

"Hush," said Zillah; "do not say that; she may understand you, young as she is, and that would be dangerous."

The little girl laughed again more merrily than before, and hid her rosy face on her good cousin's shoulder. The old lady smiled affectionately, and caressed the child with great tenderness. Oh, how sweetly the voice of her kinswoman fell upon the ear of Zillah! and the sight of her fatherless child thus folded in her arms, added to her joy. But Mrs Mildred had yet much to accomplish. She had determined, as far as lay in her power, to complete the work of peace which she had commenced. Taking the arm of the trembling Zillah beneath her own, she led her to the drawing-room, where she made her partake of some refreshment, soothed her all the time with words of affection and encouragement, and answering her questions respecting her parents with tender caution. Zillah was too much excited to perceive the restraint in her good cousin's manner when speaking on the latter point; and her inquiries followed each other too rapidly to enable her to receive direct answers to all, so that in the confusion of her thoughts, she only recollects that her father and mother had left London, and were settled in the country.

Fatigued with her journey, she was glad to retire to rest early, and her benevolent kinswoman reserved any further communications until the next day.

The morning dawned, and Zillah arose refreshed and strengthened; but her heart yearned towards her parents, and she repeated the prayer she had so often offered to heaven, that she might be permitted to see them once again, and that their anger might be changed for forgiveness. Mrs Mildred entered her room while she was dressing, and after an interchange of affectionate inquiries, they descended together to breakfast. The social meal being over, they repaired to the library, which communicated with the drawing-room by folding-doors. The kind old lady placed Zillah on the sofa, and taking her hand tenderly, as she sat down beside her, said, "My love, I have an object to accomplish, in which you must assist me."

The young widow fixed her eyes anxiously on Mrs Mildred, and replied, that anything which she could do to prove her gratitude to so beloved a friend would indeed afford her great happiness.

"Well, my dear," returned her cousin, "all that will be required is a little patience and calmness. Listen, then, to what I have to say, and do not interrupt me, since, for reasons which I will explain by and by, we have but a short time for conversation. I told you, my beloved Zillah, that your parents were gone to reside in the country. Several months had elapsed since their departure from town, when I received your letter from Paris; and after I had answered it, I could not rest without making a great effort to induce your father to consent to a reconciliation with you."

"It was a deed worthy of an angel," exclaimed Zillah in a voice trembling from emotion.

"Hush, my love! let me proceed; time presses. But last night your poor spirits were unequal to bear what I had to tell. Now, attend. I knew it was useless to write to your father, for had he seen your name in the letter, he would have refused to read it; so I took post-horses, and went in person to plead your cause. On my arrival at —, your mother was not at home, but I was welcomed most kindly by your father, who probably thought my visit was the result of one of the caprices of an old woman. I was anxious not to excite my cousin, but I thought it advisable to disclose the object of my sudden appearance at once, trusting to Providence for success. Taking his hand in mine, then—just as I hold yours now, dear Zillah—I said, 'Cousin, she is a widow, in distress, in a foreign land.' I felt your father's hand tremble, and looking into his face, saw that it was pale as a marble statue. I then ventured to continue in a low voice, 'Forgive her, cousin; she is penitent.'

"You spoke truth!" exclaimed Zillah passionately. "God knows I am penitent!" "Stop, my dear, our time is so very short," interrupted the old lady. Zillah wondered why they should be so extremely pressed for time; but she was too anxious to hear the rest to make any further remark.

Mrs Mildred proceeded: "I waited for your father

to speak, and at last the hard struggle between paternal love and long-indulged anger terminated. The former triumphed. He rushed from the room, whilst loud sobs burst from his breast. I heard his groans as he paced the apartment above. Do not speak," added the kind narrator, as she saw that Zillah was again going to give utterance to her feelings. "We have no time; here, love, take a little wine; you look faint."

It was true. Poor Zillah could scarcely support herself. At last she said, "Go on, dear kind friend."

"I must now be brief," resumed Mrs Mildred; "suffice it to say, that your father forgave you, my dear cousin; your mother had long ago done so; and when they both found that I had already sent to beg you would return immediately to your native land, their joy was great. Your gentle mother seemed to gain new life from the idea of seeing you and your infant; for, by degrees, I told them all about you. And now, my love, tell me, do you feel equal to a meeting with those dear parents from whom you have been so long separated?"

"Oh yes!" said Zillah weeping. "Oh, how I wish they were here!"

Just then a carriage drove up to the house; but Mrs Mildred desired Zillah to remain quietly where she was, as she had given orders that they should not be disturbed. There was, however, a sound of feet on the stairs, and the old lady seemed agitated. The door of the adjoining room was opened, and some persons entered. Zillah was so absorbed, however, in her own feelings, that although she heard these movements, she was, as it were, unconscious of them. Mrs Mildred kissed her forehead, and then, saying that she would return in a few minutes, left the library.

The widow remained for a short space still engrossed by her own thoughts. At last a voice, proceeding from the drawing-room, startled her. The tones were those she had heard in her childhood; they were her mother's gentle accents! Transfixed to the spot, Zillah stood in the middle of the room—her hands pressed against her beating heart, and her beautiful head bent forward in the attitude of listening. Thus was she found by Mrs Mildred, who entered, leading the little Ellen by the hand. The child ran to her mother, and caught hold of her robe with her tiny fingers. This action recalled Zillah to herself; and taking up the astonished infant, she cried, "Cousin, they are there! Oh, let me see them! My child will plead for me."

"You shall see them, dearest Zillah," said the benevolent old lady, opening the folding door, and the parents and child were soon in each other's arms.

Forgiveness and penitence marked that meeting, and sorrow was soothed by the voice of affection. Tears fell abundantly, but they consoled and relieved the heart. The little Ellen was caressed in her turn, and her young mother smiled through her tears, when she heard her own beloved parents express their admiration of her infantine beauty. But with these joyous feelings sad recollections were mingled. Zillah thought of her husband, whom she had so much loved, and for whose sake she had suffered so severely. She could wish that he, too, had been spared to acknowledge his errors to her parents, and to receive their pardon. These beloved relatives guessed the thoughts which were passing through her mind, and they spoke indulgently of the dead, avoiding all allusions to his errors. Mrs Mildred had retired from the affecting scene, and was weeping for joy in the next room. Her heart was all kindness, and her feelings as unsophisticated as those of a child. She was now summoned to join those who owed their present happiness to her. It was soon settled that cousin Mildred's society was essential to their future comfort, and that they never could be separated from her. A few weeks, therefore, after this happy meeting, the whole family went into the country, where they passed the remainder of their days in peace, Zillah devoting herself to the comfort of her beloved parents and cousin, and thus endeavouring to atone for the many sorrows of which she had been the cause.

BATTLE BETWEEN A RAT AND A CRAB.

The following anecdote was related in 1812 to a respectable individual known to us, by a sailor who witnessed the circumstance. The sailor, in company with several persons, at Sunderland, a short time before, received a crab which had wandered to the distance of about fifty yards from the water side. An old rat, on the look-out for food, sprang from his lurking place and seized the crab, who, in return, raised his forceps claws, and laid full hold of the assailant's nose, who (when opportunity offered) hastily retired, squeezing a dolorous chant, much surprised, no doubt, at the unexpected reception he had experienced. The crab, finding itself at liberty, retreated, as speedily as crab could do, towards its own element; but after a short space of time, it was arrested in its progress by Mr Rat, who renewed the contest, and experienced a second rude embrace from his antagonist. The crab, as before, retreated, bemoaning such violent treatment. Frequent and severe were the attacks; on view of his enemy, the crab always prepared for action by raising his fore claws in a threatening attitude. After a bloodless contest of half an hour, the crab, though much exhausted, had nearly reached the sea, when the rat, almost despairing of conquest, made a last and daring effort to overcome his antagonist, and succeeded (to use the seaman's term) in capizing his intended victim, a situation of which the rat immediately took advantage,

seizing, like an able general, the vanquished prey, and dragging the creature by the hind legs (proceeding backwards) into his den. After a short interval, the crab made his escape, and appeared to the spectators, mutilated and deprived of most of the small legs; the rat soon followed in pursuit of the fugitive, and forced him back to his den, where, no doubt, he regaled his wife and family.

CASA WAPPY.

[From "Domestic Verses, by Delta," 1842. Casa Wappy was the self-conferred pet name of an infant son of the poet, snatched away after a very brief illness.]

AND hast thou sought thy heavenly home,

Our fond, dear boy—

The realms where sorrow dare not come,

Where life is joy?

Pure at thy death as at thy birth,

Thy spirit caught no taint from earth;

Even by its bliss we mete our death,

Casa Wappy!

Despair was in our last farewell,

As closed thine eye;

Tears of our anguish may not tell

When thou didst die;

Words may not paint our grief for thee,

Sighs are but bubbles on the sea

Of our unfathomed agony,

Casa Wappy!

Thou wert a vision of delight

To bless us given;

Beauty embodied to our sight,

A type of heaven:

So dear to us thou wert, thou art

Even less thine own self than a part

Of mine and of thy mother's heart,

Casa Wappy!

Thy bright brief day knew no decline,

'Twas cloudless joy;

Sunrise and night alone were thine,

Beloved boy!

This morn beheld thee blithe and gay,

That found thee prostrate in decay,

And e'er a third shone, clay was clay,

Casa Wappy!

Gem of our heart, our household pride,

Earth's undesilled;

Could love have saved, thou hadst not died,

Our dear, sweet child!

Humbly we bow to Fate's decree;

Yet had we hoped that Time should see

Then mourn for us, not us for thee,

Casa Wappy!

Do what I may, go where I will,

Thou meetst at my sight;

There dost thou glide before me still—

A form of light!

I feel thy breath upon my cheek—

I see thee smile, I hear thee speak—

Till oh! my heart is like to break,

Casa Wappy!

Methinks thou smil'st before me now,

With glance of stealth;

The hair thrown back from thy full brow

In buoyant health:

I see thine eyes' deep violet light,

Thy dimpled cheek carnationed bright,

Thy clasping arms so round and white,

Casa Wappy!

The nursery shows thy pictured wail,

Thy bat, thy bow,

Thy cloak and bonnet, club and ball;

But where art thou?

A corner holds thine empty chair,

Thy playthings idly scattered there,

But speak to us of our despair,

Casa Wappy!

Even to the last thy every word—

To glad, to grieve—

Was sweet as sweetest song of bird

On summer's eve;

In outward beauty undecayed,

Death o'er thy spirit cast no shade,

And like the rainbow thou didst fade,

Casa Wappy!

We mourn for thee, when blind blank night

The chamber fills;

We pine for thee, when morn's first light

Reddens the hills:

The sun, the moon, the stars, the sea,

All, to the wall-flower and wild pea,

Are changed—we saw the world through thee,

Casa Wappy!

And though, perchance, a smile may gleam

Of casual mirth,

It doth not now, whate'er may seem,

An inward birth:

We miss thy small step on the stair;

We miss thee at thine evening prayer;

All day we miss thee, everywhere,

Casa Wappy!

Snows muffled earth when thou didst go,

In life's spring-bloom,

Down to the appointed house below,

The silent tomb.

But now the green leaves of the tree,

The cuckoo and "the busy bee."

Return—but when bring not thee,

Casa Wappy!

'Tis so; but can it be (while flowers

Revive again)—

Man's doom, in death that we and ours

For aye remain?

Oh! can it be, that o'er the grave

The grass renewed should yearly wave,

Yet God forget our child to save?—

Casa Wappy!

It cannot be: for were it so

Thus man could die,

Life were a mockery, Thought were wo,

And Truth a lie;

Heaven were a coinage of the brain,

Religion frenzy, Virtue vain,

And all our hopes to meet again,

Casa Wappy!

Then be to us, O dear, lost child!

With beam of love,

A star, death's uncongenial wild

Smiling above;

Soon, soon thy little feet have trod

The skyward path, the seraph's road,

That led thee back from man to God,

Casa Wappy!

Yet 'tis sweet balm to our despair,

Fond, fairest boy,

That heaven is God's, and thou art there,

With him in joy:

There past are death and all its woes,

There beauty's stream for ever flows,

And pleasure's day no sunset knows,

Casa Wappy!

Farewell, then—for a while, farewell—

Pride of my heart!

It cannot be that long we dwell,

Thus torn apart:

Time's shadows like the shuttle flee;

And, dark howe'er life's night may be,

Beyond the grave I'll meet with thee,

Casa Wappy!

HANS IN LUCK.

Hans had served his master seven years, and at last said to him, "Master, my time is up, I should like to go home and see my mother; so give me my wages." And the master said, "You have been a faithful and good servant, so your pay shall be handsome." Then he gave him a piece of silver that was as big as his head.

Hans took out his pocket-handkerchief, put the piece of silver into it, threw it over his shoulder, and jogged off homewards. As he went lazily on, dragging one foot after another, a man came in sight, trotting along gaily on a capital horse. "Ah!" said Hans aloud, "what a fine thing it is to ride on horseback; there he sits as if he was at home in a chair; he trips against no stones, spares his shoes, and gets on he hardly knows how." The horseman heard this, and said, "Well, Hans, why do you go on foot then?" "Ah!" said he, "I have this load to carry; to be sure it is silver, but it is so heavy that I can't hold up my head, and it hurts my shoulder sadly." "What do you say to changing?" said the horseman; "I will give you my horse, and you shall give me the silver." "With all my heart," said Hans. "But I tell you one thing, you'll have a weary task to drag it along." The horseman got off, took the silver, helped Hans up, gave him the bridle in his hand, and said, "When you want to go very fast, you must smack your lips loud, and cry 'Jip'."

Hans was delighted as he sat on the horse, and rode merrily on. After a time he thought he should go a little faster, so he smacked his lips, and cried "Jip." Away went the horse at full gallop; and before Hans knew what he was about, he was thrown off, and lay in a ditch by the road-side; and his horse would have run off, if a shepherd who was coming by driving a cow had not stopped it. Hans soon came to himself, and got upon his legs again; he was sadly vexed, and said to the shepherd, "This riding is no joke when a man gets on a beast like this, that stumbles and flings him off as if he would break his neck. However, I'm off now once for all; I like your cow a great deal better; one can walk along at one's leisure behind her, and have milk, butter, and cheese, every day into the bargain. What would I give to have a cow?" "Well," said the shepherd, "if you are so fond of her, I will change my cow for your horse." "Done!" said Hans merrily. The shepherd jumped upon the horse, and away he rode.

Hans drove off the cow quietly, and thought his bargain very lucky one. "If I have only a piece of bread (and I certainly shall be able to get that), I can, whenever I like, eat my butter and cheese with it; and when I am thirsty, I can milk my cow and drink the milk; what can I wish for more?" When he came to an inn, he halted, ate up all his bread, and gave away his last penny for a glass of beer; then he drove his cow towards his mother's village; and the heat grew greater as noon came on, till at last he found himself on a wide heath that would take him more than an hour to cross, and he began to be so hot and parched, that his tongue clave to the roof of his mouth. "I can find a cure for this," thought he; "now I will milk my cow and quench my thirst;" so he tied her to the stump of a tree, and held his leather cap to milk into, but not a drop was to be had.

While he was trying his luck, and managing the matter very clumsily, the uneasy beast gave him a kick on the head that knocked him down, and there he lay a long time senseless. Luckily, a butcher soon came by, driving a pig in a wheelbarrow. "What is the matter with you?" said the butcher, as he helped him up. Hans told him what had happened, and the butcher gave him a flask, saying, "There, drink and refresh yourself; your cow will give you no milk; she is an old beast, good for nothing but the slaughter-house." "Alas, alas!" said Hans, "who would have thought it? If I kill her, what will she be good for? I hate cow beef, it is not tender enough for me. If it were a pig now, one could do something with it; it would, at any rate, make some sausages." "Well," said the butcher, "to please you, I'll change and give you the pig for the cow." "Heaven reward you for your kindness!" said Hans, as he gave the butcher the cow, and took the pig off the wheelbarrow, and drove it off, holding by the string that was tied to its leg.—*German Popular Stories.*

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